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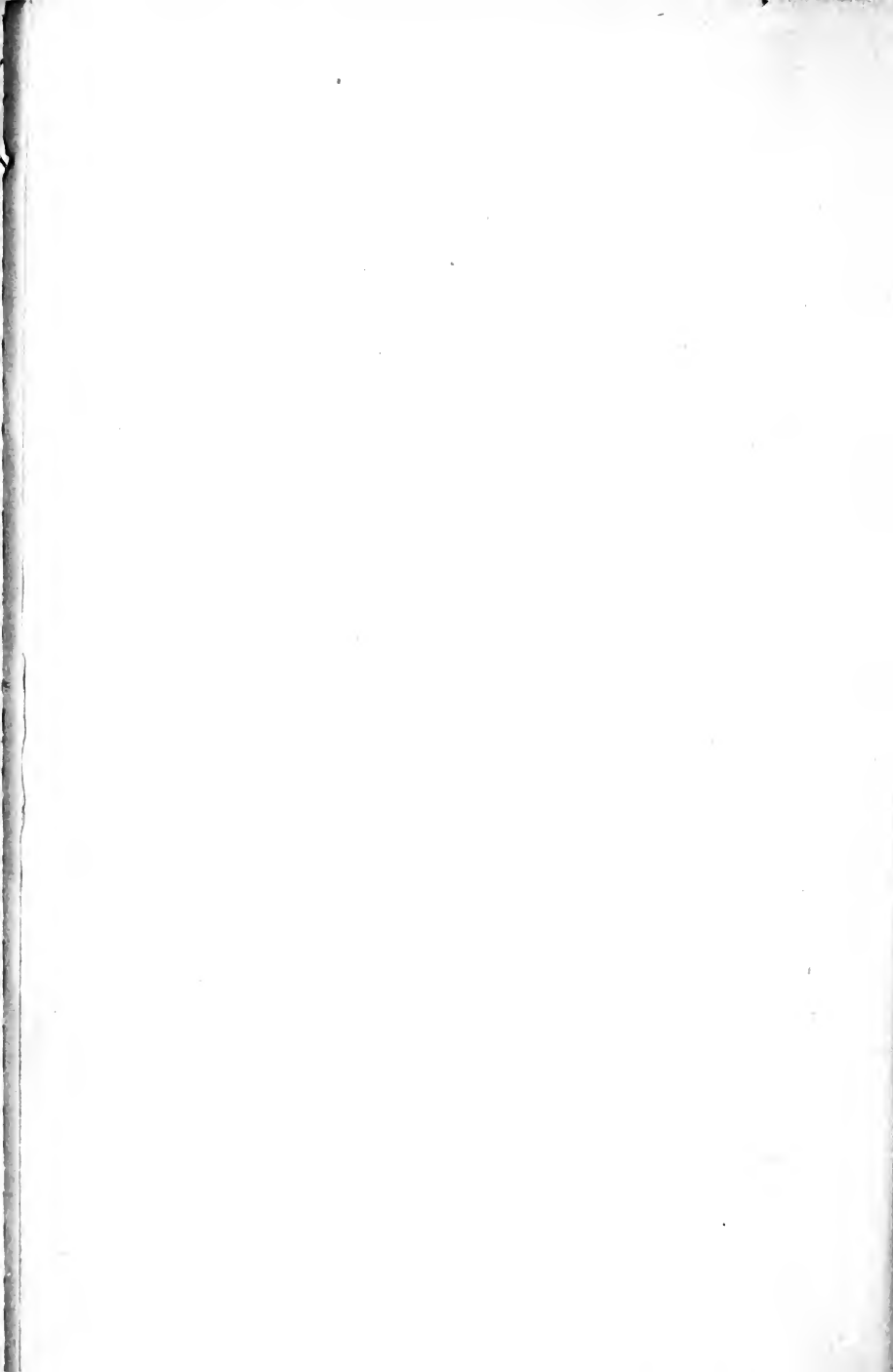
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A VISION OF ENGLAND

AND OTHER POEMS

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A VISION OF ENGLAND

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

JOHN RICKARDS MOZLEY



LONDON

RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON

Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen

1898

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LOAN STACK

TO
SIR WALTER JOSEPH SENDALL,
K.C.M.G.,
WHO, ON BEHALF OF ENGLAND,
SO WORTHILY PRESIDES OVER THE ISLAND
OF CYPRUS,
A KIND FRIEND AND JUDICIOUS CRITIC,
THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

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TO THE QUEEN.

O THOU that hast been found a link of gold
Purged by the fire, to bind our scattered race !
Thou that hast caught a ray from that pure face
Which saintly Louis bore in days of old !
Thy sixty years of sovereignty, full told,
Have moved our hearts. Some sign, whereby
to trace
Our people's brotherhood, we need ; the grace
To thee was given, such worthy part to hold.
O when all signs and shadows flee before
The true heart-kingdom, which the Almighty Sire
Shall raise upon His Christ, and more and more
Fashion for rule with nobly-winged desire,
May thou and thine go through the open door
And hear ' Well done ! ' and join the heavenly
choir.

A VISION OF ENGLAND.

FROM height to height the starry hosts ascend,
And gloriously from deep to deep are borne,
In number, as in marvel, without end.
Far, far, beyond the gates of night and morn
They reign divinely, and in strength unworn
Of love and life hold commune each with each ;
But we, alas ! in earthly shade forlorn,
Know not the manner of their heavenly speech,
And dimly read or guess the lesson they would
teach ;

For when our mother Earth of yore did sink
From fiery essence into sleep of stone,
Her dying pulses lost the heavenly link ;
And we, her late-born children, have not known

Those mystic harmonies, or held our own
Concord of purpose, but have gone astray
In jangling crowds or wildernesses lone ;
Yet is our gloom now lightened by a ray
Presaging strength restored and everlasting day.

Love has unsealed in man the fount of tears,
And with those tears a million thoughts arise,
Loosed from the bondage of unnumbered years,
And seek the kindred throbbings of the skies,
And move with prayer and penitential sighs
Unto that Power in whom all beings rest,
The Father of our spirits, who replies
With fire of comfort in the eternal quest,
And tunes each jarring chord within the strain-
ing breast.

Therefore the splendours born of heaven begin
To glow thro' our companionships of earth,
Which, fashioned into divers textures, win
Increase of lustre from their blended worth ;
The land, the people of our blood and birth,

The church beloved, high knowledge and fair
art,
Adventure wild, and sport of lighter mirth—
These are an alchemy to melt the heart,
And lure the emulous soul to dare some nobler
part ;

Yea, though these symbols of our brotherhood
Are filched away at times by pride or fear
To baser ends, and serve the foes of good,
Delivered shall they be, and then appear
Unsullied, and this latter age shall hear
Interpretation of the voice divine,
Cleaving the darkness of our lower sphere ;
Where burns the beacon of the sacred sign,
There shall immortal joy all mortal souls entwine.

That sign once lifted on Judæan hills
For shame and scorn, now fosters gentle might
Among the nations ; whose contending wills
Feel, hardly know, the presence of its light,
Whereby they are transformed, and so unite

For mercy and for hope. Mankind shall see
(Ay, the time hastes), nor marvel at the sight,
All nations under heaven's high canopy
Unto the good of all in glorious peace agree.

Nor think, when comes that hour, as come it
will,
O dearest of all lands, that bear'st the stem
Of many branching peoples, and dost fill
Thy heart with pride, England, beholding them,
Think not the brilliance of thy single gem
Shall be impeached, or marred by stain or
flaw ;
For even as Athens, Rome, Jerusalem,
So thine imperial city gave a law
And spirit unto men, still held in heedful awe ;

That perfect rule demands reciprocal,
Not single, will. Such noble government,
Casting its root in this realm's capital,
Grew through the land and won secure consent,
Confirming to the name of Parliament

An everlasting praise ; and London more
Has meed of honour, seeing such intent
In her was centred, than for all the store
Borne up the tides of Thames to enrich the
clamorous shore.

Take not, O England, for thy chiefest strength
The visible armour of thy majesty ;
Trust rather in the hearts which through the
length
And breadth of the wide world are bound to
thee.
These are thine empire's fulcrum ; these shall be
Invincible. 'Tis not the glint of gold
Can purchase faithful ministers and free ;
Have thou but these, all else in these is told ;
Force flows abundant in, when Justice casts the
mould.

Neither account thou as man's sole concern
Nurture and raiment, house and heritage ;
With ampler ardour human bosoms burn,

And all the past and all the future age
Has power to move us. Wilt thou truly gauge
The things that are? look back on what has
 been ;
Life's keynote breathes to thee from history's
 page.
Read thou but rightly what the symbols mean,
Sweet harmonies shall flow upon thy ways serene.

How came it thou wast torn from Europe's
 strand
In ancient days? The Atlantic, surging strong
Between the mounts o'er which th' archangel's
 hand
Once held its mighty guard, as told in song,
In moon-persuaded currents swept along,
And smote on Beechy Head with gathering
 roar ;
Then, straitened in his channel, piled the throng
Of waters high, and, like a lion, tore
The Dover isthmus through, and reached the
 German shore.

So wast thou separate made—a land of woods,
Serried, and thinning slowly where the fen
Mingled salt sea with fenceless river floods :
Across the marshes boomed the bittern then ;
Ranged in free pride each forest denizen,
Boar, wolf, and elk ; the eagle's frequent
 scream
Rang fierce and far o'er every western glen ;
All Nature thrilled in earth and air and
 stream,
With life exulting, wild, but fitful as a dream.

Ah, surely from that strange and distant time,
Whereon with curious eyes we backward gaze,
A breath of beauty, and a sense sublime,
Comes wafted down to these familiar days ;
Those waters pure, that forest's unhewn maze,
Gathered in silent solitude a power,
Which not to spoil, but gently use and raise
To fuller fragrant wealth of fruit and flower,
Was man's appointed task and richly-guerdoned
 dower.

But that prophetic seed, our human kind,
When with dominion it began to grow,
Lagged here in immaturity behind
The grace and force that other lands could
show :

Thames led his streams in wild barbaric flow
Among yet wilder tribes, whose martial clang,
Echoing in Rome and rumoured to and fro,
On Virgil's wondering ears remotely rang :
' Britons divided far from all the world,' he sang.

O grave majestic voice, with sadness sounding
Out of the halls long shattered and decayed,
That erst were Rome ! how crashed the storm,
confounding
Time's ancient order, from within betrayed
By selfish sloth, alas ! to hordes arrayed
For daring conquest ; nor could fall alone
The sovran city, but her witheréd shade
Enfeebled all beneath her shelter grown
(All, save the germs divine among the nations
strown).

In floods and night a world was cast away ;
Then from the dawn obscure in thunder pealed
Thy name, O England, as it sounds to-day ;
Britain thou wast before, and thou art sealed
Yet with the olden stamp, and moor and field
Breathe many a memory of the valiant race,
Who, standing spear by spear and shield by
shield,

Looked on the great first Cæsar face to face,
Whose line and blood have still among thy hills
a place ;

But England is thy bridal name, whereto
Our warrior fathers won and wedded thee :
Rough was their dalliance, stern their way to
woo ;

The shout of battle was the minstrelsy
At their espousal, whom the northern sea
Bred with its winds, and from its bosom poured
(Wave after wave, untameable and free),
On coast and woody vale and rolling sward
To where the wizard peaks of Wales keep æry ward.

‘Anglorum terra’ thou becamest then,
And on thy breast were nourished sons so fair
That when the saint—most holy deemed of
men—

Beheld their captive grace, he cried they were
‘Not Angli, rather Angeli.’ Such air
Of native worth through chains of servitude
Transpired, as if hereafter they should bear
Some more than sceptred rule, with spells
imbued

To wake the abyss of space and time’s infinitude.

O land! O race beloved! The saintly lips
Which spake thy praise sped also to thy soul
Arrows of light. May never strife eclipse
Remembrance of past service! That control
Over thyself, which makes thee one and whole,
By Rome was grafted in thy nature first—
By Rome, the priestly city, on thy roll
Of friends scarce reckoned; be it yet rehearsed
That she thy tender years in conduct nobly
nursed.

Out of Iona shone a healing ray
On thee unfledged; but 'twas in Rome thy
kings—

Great Alfred and his peers—found strength and
stay.

Thou didst unfold the plumage of thy wings;
Angle and Saxon learned the living springs
Of common nurture; e'en the roving Dane
To thee consented, and forebore his stings.

And, last, the conquering Norman's fiery strain
Flashed into thee new force through every nerve
and vein.

Thou wast as iron from the furnace wrought,
O nation, by the hammer-strokes of Fate;
Then, step by step, thy slow-maturing thought
Reached toward the breadth and height of
man's estate;

Howbeit thy princes, striving to be great,
Used thy obedience, and forgot to mark
What seeds of thine in silence would dilate
And burst the enclosing husk, what hidden spark
Leap out in flame athwart thy spirit's barrier dark.

Great princes were they truly, whom the slope
Of Cressy knew, and vineyards of Poitier,
And sylvan Agincourt, that put the cope
On valorous deeds, whose record, ringing clear
Like music down the ages, thrills the ear
Of thee and thine ; as when from thickest fray
The accent of the kingly voice we hear,
‘ Let the boy win his spurs ’ ; or, ‘ Cousin, nay,
Wish not for one man more to share our fame to-
day ’ ;

So spake thy kings, and these are words that knit
Fibre to fibre of the heart high-strung
At such an hour, wherein a man doth fit
Action to purpose, claiming place among
His country’s heroes ; when the braggart
tongue
Is silent, and for victory or death
Resolve is ta’en ; when mortal life is flung
A cypher out of reckoning, and none saith
What all behold, the Shade that awes their bated
breath,

Then, at such hour, with quickening voices call
Thy Edward and thy Henry, and the brave
Listen and hear, and gird themselves to fall
If so 'tis need thy weal to guard and save ;
As that victorious sailor on the wave
By Trafalgar, and Wolfe upon the steep
That crowns Quebec, and Nicholson who gave
His gallant soul by Delhi's conquered keep,
And Havelock where through Ind the mighty
rivers sweep,

And Gordon 'mid the far encircling sands
Of the twin Niles ; but who shall tell the line
Of all who unto death thy dear commands
Loved and obeyed, and so their names entwine
Indissolubly in one wreath with thine ?
Or who shall count thy noble nameless ones
Fallen in the fight for thee, who left the sign
Of duty and of courage to thy sons,
Who are or e'er shall be while Time his courses
runs ?

O England, may thy people ne'er forget
The road that these have gone ! Natheless the
root

And deepest energy of man is set
In fields diverse from those where cannon-bruit
And clashing swords breed victory, whose fruit
Is red with blood of foes : the tree of life
Blossoms far otherwise, and every shoot
And leafy spray thereof with pangs is rife
Of martyrs who, unarmed, have dared the deadly
strife ;

Or with the tears and sweat of generous toil,
Which bargained not for any recompense,
But trusted God and man. Of such, thy soil
Has fertile been ; and, through the years intense
With gathering spirit, when the piercing sense
Of individual conscience cast aside
Authority's stern yoke and proud pretence,
Because it seemed not pure when truly tried,
Thou hadst in thee strong sons who suffered and
who died.

And yet 'twas not a son of thine who led
The stubborn fight, and struck for Freedom's
sake

The conquering blow. That warrior soul was
bred

Not on thy shores : a German voice did shake
The nations in their slumber, and awake
Down to the core the questions men must try ;
If one should ask, How camest thou to break
The custom of thy youth, and filial tie ?

By Luther's test thy cause thou needs must justify.

Then, Albion, was thy flowering prime, when
thou

Wast lifted up to passion's zenith height ;
Strength in thy hands, and counsel on thy brow,
Shone out repellent of the alien might :

In daring deeds was thy supreme delight ;

And, as an albatross on southern seas

With buffeting of wings begins his flight,

Stirring a stormy whirl in wave and breeze,

But cleaves anon the air with swift and silent
ease,

Even with such ease, the strain and struggle o'er,
Thy people, manlier for the searching throes,
Spread sail afar, and glanced from shore to
shore,
Holding in cheap regard the wrath of foes ;
Nor torrid rays availed, nor arctic snows,
But that each strand, flecked by the salt sea-
foam,
Should learn thy name, to thee itself disclose ;
And that thy wanderers, wheresoe'er they roam,
Should count the ocean-paths familiar as their
home.

And with that spreading of thy sails there went
A song from Nature's purest fountain welling,
Divine as that immortal ravishment
By Sirens sung, upon the zephyr swelling
Unto Ulysses' ear, his praises telling
With flattery sweet, and bidding him draw near ;
But this was nobler, for it taught the quelling
Of base self-love, and vanity, and fear,
And with a myriad charms did man to man endear.

Shakespeare it was so mightily who swept
Strings golden of his human-hearted lyre,
Who thrice a hundred years the crown has
 kept,
Compeer with Dante, o'er the minstrel choir ;
Nigh them is throned the grand primeval sire
Who sang Achilles' wrath and Hector's fate ;
Or if some lightnings of Hebraic fire
Touched closer yet the empyrean's gate,
Of all the sons of men none else has been their
 mate.

None like to these; and yet what noble throng,
From thine awakening hour until to-day,
Has lulled the aching of thy toil with song !
And one had chanted earlier, while the grey
Of dawn was breaking: Chaucer's humorous lay
With thy half-waking dreams had intertwined.
But those thy bards, who felt the full-orbed ray,
What voice shall reckon nor remorseful find
Some debt the heart would pay has slipped the
 heedless mind ?

Forgive me, spirits flaming and beloved,
Who on our English tongue have set the seal
Of everlasting beauty, and have proved
What hues of glory passion can reveal
In earth and heaven—how poesy can steal
The senses from the sorrow that has broken
Life's spring, and with its magic finger heal ;
Forgive, if here your names are left unspoken,
Who for yourselves have writ your own undying
token !

But envy will not carp if one lone form
Be singly honoured ; he that stood severe,
Breasting, like solitary pine, the storm
Which shook the mountains ; he, the poet-seer,
Reft of his sight, but in his spirit clear,
Who saw the throne of God, and Paradise,
And the dread wastes of hell ; whose inner ear
Caught angel-music. Others fall or rise,
But Milton equal lives, while live the azure
skies.

And Burns, for Scotia's sake, shall here be
named—

Raciest of bards, than nightingale more sweet—
Because his country, that was never tamed
In war's fierce whirlwind by the iron sleet,
In days of peace outstretched her hands to greet
Her rival; and more noble is the sound
Of Britain's name than erst, since kindred meet
Herein who once were parted, and are found
Wielding a common strength, with common wel-
fare crowned.

Ah, England! look upon that other race,
Which at thy door hath sat in grief so long,
Accusing thee that thou dost her abase.
Perchance 'tis so; at least, forgive the wrong,
Whate'er it be, in her; be brave, being strong.
Hast thou not heard and known that generous
trust
Plucks safety out of danger? and the throng
Of evil phantoms crumbles into dust
By truth unmasked, and pierced by mercy's heal-
ing thrust.

Look upon Ireland, recognize the flow—
Vivid, impassioned—of her Celtic blood ;
If swift her kindling wrath, be sure not slow
The pulse of her awakening gratitude ;
How oft the scions of her stock have stood
By thine, when victory o'er thy banners flew !
Oh, scan her thoughts with no ungentle mood !
Whate'er against them weighs, this much is
true :

Heart-wishes, well fulfilled, the soul exalt, renew.

Now of thy noble glories I could tell,
England, from morn till evening ; how the
pride
Of fair far cities by the southern swell
Of ocean, or Canadian river-tide
Majestic, knows itself with thee allied ;
How to thy Newton Nature's central law
Shone out, by clear profound research descried ;
Or what the deep relation Darwin saw
In realms of life by man approached with trem-
bling awe :

Or of thy noble debts ; for this is so—

The spirit's debt is noble, and doth enhance

The debtor's honour. Thou hadst power to
show

To all mankind, through perilous circumstance,

The way of ordered freedom ; then to France

It appertained to teach the world and thee

One lesson more, a spur for life's advance ;

That an intrinsic deep equality

Subsists in man as man, that all may honoured
be.

Which mystery of our mortal soul and state

Thou canst interpret, and renew, and bring

(As none beside) from careless scorn or hate

Into observance—thou, beneath whose wing

Cluster so many broods. Oh, may the spring

Of kindred currents in all human blood

Be pledge to thee of some great harvesting,

Far in the future, when the multitude

Of many hues and tongues shall reap one common
good !

Yea, long before that hour, within thyself
A tenderer strain must flow 'tween rich and
poor,
That these be ne'er beguiled through love of pelf,
Nor those in sullen indolence endure ;
But each with knowledge and affection sure
Consult the other's need and just reward,
With conscience open and a mind secure ;
Through trust and labour then shall wealth be
stored,
And all the social frame be wrought to glad accord.

O England ! think not thou canst yet rejoice
As one that doffs his armour after fight,
And hears the full congratulating voice
Of friends and neighbours in the tranquil light
Of evening. Here to-day thou art in sight
Of perils, and dost feel the prescient throe
Which pierces ere it heals. Let no affright
Weaken thy arms ; brace nerve and sinew so,
As one that out of ills with stronger force doth
grow.

For if with loyalty thou hear'st the sound
Of counsels that from ages past descend,
All splendours from the height and depth profound
Of being shall upon thy courses blend ;
The blossom of thy branches without end
Shall teem and flourish ; and thy lucent ways
(When God from mortal eyes the film shall
rend,
And all the earth to heavenly likeness raise)
Eternally shall glow along the starry maze.

LOVE LOST AND REGAINED.

A DECADE OF LYRICS.

I.

FIRST LOVE.

(The Lover Sings.)

O LOVELY vision ! there were three ;
Between the boughs they flashed on me.
Three Graces in a mountain glade ;
At tennis on a lawn they played.

The ball glanced by ; I caught it there ;
Drew nigh to me the fairest fair.
I gave the ball, I touched her hand,
She looked a look of sweet command.

Her eyes enforced me there to stay
And watch the rapture of her play,
Her beauteous energy entwined
With noble ardour of the mind.

Alone she matched the other twain
With merry skill ; at last again
The ball o'erpassed her guard, and fell
Beside me in the grassy dell.

Then, as I gave it her, my soul
Outran the tardy will's control ;
' Lady,' I sighed, ' this heart of mine
For ever and for aye is thine.'

Blushed all her face a livelier red ;
With sudden verve the ball she sped ;
But soon her lips, in passing, just
Whispered the gentle word, ' I trust.'

' If thou wilt trust me,' I replied,
' Come, meet me here ere eventide.'
She smiled, and now—oh, radiant sight !
She comes, she comes, through evening light.

. I.

IN THE GLEN.

(The Maiden Sings.)

O golden sun ! O happy day !
Why hasten, hasten thus away ?
A little while, a little while,
A little longer on us smile.

Dark-vestured queen, so soon must thou
With starry circle wreathe thy brow ?
O Night, anon thou'lt welcome be,
When he I love is gone from me.

Is it the star of love that shines
Between yon cloudy western lines ?
O star untrue, that giv'st command
To sever loving hand from hand !

When he I love from me is gone,
And in my chamber all alone
I loose the honeysuckle spray
He culled to deck my hair to-day,

The fragrance still will breathe him nigh
In dreams, as on my bed I lie ;
In dreams with him I'll wander o'er
The mountain side, the lake's still shore.

But now there is no need to dream ;
We sit beside the bubbling stream.
O Night, a little while delay !
O linger yet, wan fading day !

Alas ! they hear not. Sad and slow
The West puts off her crimson glow ;
The night winds gather, bleak and chill,
And louder sounds the rushing rill.

III.

DREAM FOREBODINGS.

(The Lover Sings.)

Sleeping or waking
Is it I lie ?
The dawn is breaking
O'er earth and sky.

Where'er I look
My love is seen—
In rushing brook,
In meadow green ;

From high cloud-towers
She bends to me ;
In fairest flowers
Her lips I see ;

Woodlands are ringing
Clear with her voice.
What is she singing ?
' Rejoice, rejoice.'

For joy to hear her
My heart expands.
Now draws she nearer,
I clasp her hands ;

But whence the fear
That clouds her eye ?
A falling tear,
A bitter cry ;

Lightning and thunder
And whirlwind roar
Tear us asunder
For evermore !

IV.

EXALTATION.

(The Maiden Sings.)

Oh, was there ever, my heart, was there ever
Heart of a maiden so happy before ?
Answers my heart to me : 'Never, oh, never !'
Answer and echo sky, ocean, and shore.

How shall I tell it ? An eagle down-rushing
Lifted me up from the soil of my birth,
Fears of my bosom all tenderly hushing,
Till I could gaze on the vastness of earth,

Gaze from the height and the sweep of his pinions,
Dizzy no longer, unscreening my sight ;
Lo, how they dwindle, earth's fading dominions,
Matched with the wondrous abysses of light !

Lover beloved, who hast shown me the portal
 Into cathedrals unbuilt by the hand,
Thrilling I look through the vistas immortal,
 Where the far lights of the future expand ;

Come to my side, and thy strength shall uphold me
 Through the rough world and the tumult of
 men ;

Come and rejoice, and thy arms shall enfold me
 Close to thy breast in the shades of the glen :

While multitudinous leaves rustle o'er us,
 While the brook flashes and lilts on its way,
Throstle and linnet in jubilant chorus
 Blithely shall chime to the welcome of May.

Hark ! 'twas a bell, and how solemn the pealing !
 Passing, ay, passing ; 'tis surely a knell.
Whose is the doom the sad hour is revealing ?
 Is it my joy that is sighing farewell ?

V.

THE BLOW FALLS.

(The Lover Sings.)

'Tis done ; and hers the hand, not mine,
That gave the last, the fatal sign.
Her voice decreed Love's doom, and I,
Alas ! consented he should die.

Was it a crime we did to-day ?
No ; truth commanded us to slay.
For truth we perish, and to spare
Our dearest passion, recreant were.

I knew, I knew, that far below
The surface of our happy glow
Eddied the heart's impetuous force
In wayward, solitary course ;

And joyously my soul had borne
The flashing of her queenly scorn,
If one soft gleam had been descried
Beyond the ocean of her pride.

Ah, wherefore—but I see too well,
The blow inevitably fell;
As if a wrathful alien hand
Parted our fibres, strand from strand;

And had we both in full foreknown
These measured sorrows, groan by groan,
Nor she nor I had changed a word
That either uttered, either heard.

Oh, can it be? and is it true?
Vain heart, be still; and, love, adieu.
By Lethe's wave be covered o'er
Those burning thoughts for evermore.

Beneath the stars of other skies
This hand shall dare some new emprise,
That haply so my name may shine
In honour's everlasting line.

VI.

AFTER THREE YEARS.

(The Maiden Sings.)

O stars of piercing might !
To you, through silence deep
And breathings of the night,
I lonely weep ;

And ask if you have seen
With your pure eyes intense
That faithless I have been
To innocence ;

Or wherefore lies the load
So chill my heart upon ?
The stern and joyless road
Still lengthens on ;

Ah, whither is he fled
Who walked with me of old ?
Perchance among the dead,
Entombed and cold !

Did I repel him, then,
Whose love was once so dear ?
Will he not come again
My heart to cheer ?

O heavenly pardonings,
Whate'er my fault has been,
Unseal your sacred springs
And cleanse my sin ;

Dissolve this icy chain ;
Oh, let my spirit's sigh
Be breathed in generous pain,
Or let me die !

VII.

REMEMBRANCE FROM A FAR LAND.

(The Lover Sings.)

The fight is won, and now I am alone ;
Applause yet echoes on my willing ear.
What sweetness lacks that I erewhile have known ?
What memory haunts me ? What sad shade is
here ?

When from the east the cold clear day was born,
Far o'er the fruitful level plain arose
High peaks ethereal, crowned with golden morn,
And raimented in strength of stainless snows.

But as I journeyed on, the lesser hills
Came in between and hid that heavenly sight ;
And then in cliffs and woods and falling rills
And spaces of green lawn I took delight ;

And when the noon grew hot in heaven, I lay
In shade of elms with chestnuts intertwined ;
And children heaped on me in laughing play
The fallen flowers, and ran and looked behind.

And then there came a maiden, young and fair :
Ah me, how fair ! and in her eyes there gleamed
A light more clear than sunrise, and her hair
Downward, unloosed, in golden masses streamed ;

Her gentle voice, her timid trustful look
With musical soft love were overflowing ;
She led me past the fountains of the brook
To caverns cool, with fern and mosses growing ;

And fed me with soft words, nor e'er withdrew
Her hand from mine, her eyes from off mine
eyes :

My heart beat fast ; nor whence she came I knew,
From earth, or flood, or depth of azure skies.

Ah, whither is she fled ? I did not weep ;
A flash, a cry ; then fell my fainting sight.
And afterwards I wakened, as from sleep,
And saw the earth, and men, and heaven's fair
light.

VIII.

THE WEST WIND BLOWS.

(The Maiden Sings.)

O gentle wind, that breathest o'er the sea
Upon the swelling buds of spring,
And passing tremblingly
The loving birds that pair and sing,
Reachest to me, ev'n me,
Filling my heart with memories and sighs,
With tears mine eyes,

How is it that thou canst not bring
The spirit of my youth again,
So long forgotten, and now sought in vain?
The fountains of my grief
I know; but those of succour and relief
Escape my very soul's imagining.

IX.

RECOVERY IN THE SPRINGTIME.

(The Lover Sings.)

Now is the forest in glory awaking;
Shine the far hills with tiaras of snow;
Tender the sheath where each blossom is break-
ing;
Fresh are the meads where the daffodils blow.
Breathed there a voice on the wings of the morn-
ing?
Love of my heart, thou hast called me to thee!
Through the world's tumult of sighing and scorn-
ing
Came the glad summons: 'Ah, hasten to me!'

Oh, I will follow thee, queen of my passion,
 Heard was thine accent, thyself will I win ;
Lo, as a weft for thy fingers to fashion
 Quicken and tremble my heartstrings within ;

Swift as an arrow by archer unerring
 Sped to the mark, am I come to thy feet ;
All on my pathway thy spirit was stirring ;
 High on the mountain's lone bosom we meet.

Star of my life ! my adored one, and peerless !
 Tried as a woman and pure as a child ;
Who was thy solace through days that were
 cheerless ?
Who hath upheld thee so long in the wild ?

‘ God and his Angels ! ’ thou whisperest truly ;
 Yes, ’mid the ramparts of pinnaced stone,
Smit by the scourges of tempests unruly,
 God and his Angels have spread thee a throne.

How have I sought thee through darkness and
error !

How have I loved thee, and wept for thy woe !
Loosened at last are the pangs of our terror,
Sweet are the tears that for happiness flow.

Come, let us hence, for the valleys await us ;
Come where the footsteps of mortals have trod ;
Hearts that are hardest can envy nor hate us,
Signed with the seal of the sorrow of God.

Come, and the weak shall revive in thy glances ;
Come with free laughter and joyance of mirth ;
Come, for e'en now, as the daystar advances,
Life re-awakes in the fibres of earth.

X.

PARADISE.

(The Bride Sings.)

Oh, the happy, happy, happy time !
Dear beloved, who hast not wrought in vain !
Vanished colours of our golden prime
Start to life and glory once again.

O ye solitary mountains, whence
 Silent gazing toward the infant morn
Both our hearts were captured ; O ye glens,
 White with spray from roaring brooks upborne ;
Once again your spell is pure and whole ;
 Once again, O race of seed divine,
Men and women, comrades of my soul,
 Ye with us are linked by mystic sign ;
Lover and beloved, 'twixt me and thee
 Thought is clear, there is no jealous bar ;
Through our bosoms beats eternity ;
 Round our footsteps the immortals are.
Well I know, but may not lightly name,
 What the powers who helped our sorrowing state ;
Out of darkness breathed the heavenly flame ;
 Fled the mists, forthgleamed the blessed gate.
Earth reclaims us now, and night is near ;
 Fades the landscape, sinks the glowing sun ;
Infinite expands the starry sphere ;
 'Tis enough to know that we are one.

NATURE'S HARMONIES.

THE garden of our earth is sown with seed
 Various, that in their growth aye intertwine
 Each with the other ; multiform their life,
 Shape, colour, beauty, strength, yet evermore
 Blending for peace or war they heavenward
 breathe,
 And evermore the deep eternal root
 Ministers succour to its like, until,
 In perfect order side by side conformed,
 They commune, life with life, and love with love.
 So smiles the world in fair alliance knit ;
 The pasture loves the feet of browsing kine ;
 The furrowy glebe the horse that toils and tills ;
 Wild rose and tangled honeysuckle mix
 Their sweets, their hues ; the forest's branching
 peers

Contend for high pre-eminence, yet ward
The winter's roaring blast from kindred heads.
So all beneath the sun's all-fostering ray
Join Nature's harmony, whose gathering tone
From age to age in ampler compass swells.

A HARBOUR OF THE SOUTH.

‘LAND ho!’ ’twas cried ; night lay upon the sea.
Through the strait portals flies the eager ship,
’Twixt guarding heights on either hand scarce
seen,

To the bosom of that fair lake, far withdrawn,
Whose dim mysterious tremblings darkly show
A bride’s pure soul, and whom doth she await ?
Lo ! suddenly he comes ; he doth not stay,
When once his burning heart is set to move,
But rising from his eastern hall he greets
Her deep abounding flood with love and light.
How like a conqueror beats he back the night !
Not lingering in long dalliance with the foe,
But winning all at once the fields of air.
And she, his peerless queen, exulting now
In the fulfilment of her dear desire,
Lays all her treasures out to mortal eye.
O radiant peaks, that pierce the azure height,

Gemmed coronet wherein the splendours meet
Of heaven and earth entwined ! Ye mighty walls
With vermeil or with glowing purple dyed,
Descending sheer to the green wave, and there
So mirrored scarce is seen the line that parts
Hard rock from mimic semblance ! Silver sands
Curving in lonely bays, from whence arise
The feathered forests, in whose dusky dells
Faint distant torrents roar, with misty spray
Nursing fantastic cordage of green growth !
What fragrant message from the flowery lawn
Bearest thou, gentle gale, of yonder isle,
Where palm and myrtle clothe the rocky marge ?
If life and Nature did not inly beat
With ever-changing pulse of keen desire,
Sure we our everlasting home would set
Within such paradise ; but vainly thus
We dream. Behold the tokens of man's toil !
The white-walled city, and the myriad masts
Fluttering with pennons ; and awakening men
Begin to stir, and send their hum afar,
And dashing oars strike o'er the glittering sea.

IN THE NIGHT.

GONE is the twilight glimmer, and no more
Hangs the bright crescent with her glowing horns
Above the western verge ; the night is full,
And all the mighty hills in darkness lie.
Ye stars ! the hour is yours. Immeasurable,
In the interminable depths unseen,
Recede your glories, myriad, myriad waves
Flowing in one, the infinite revealed
To mortal eyes. And has the Spirit eterne,
Parent of life, our life, in whom we trust,
Has he deserted your bright tabernacles,
Left you as idle signs of barren being,
Soulless and heartless ? Or not rather, full
Of living impulse and sweet harmony,
Flash ye your messages athwart the night,
Unknown, mysterious, undecipherable
To us poor nurslings of earth's stony breast ?

A VISION OF DESIRE.

My love came to me in the night ;
 She came in visions bitter-sweet ;
Gently she glided up to me,
 And knelt her down before my feet.

Upon my hands she laid her own,
 Soft as the falling snowflakes are ;
Her eyes they were not bent on mine,
 But rested on the heavens afar.

Her face to mine it was so near,
 That with my lips I kissed her cheek ;
With trembling lips I kissed her twice ;
 Three times I kissed, but dared not speak.

I dared not speak, for so had flashed
The fire that burned my very heart :
Alas, my love ! alas, dear love !
And didst thou know and yet depart ?

But if she loved me or if no,
I knew not ; never word she said ;
She cast on me a pitying look,
And with the breaking daylight fled.

IN HOPE'S DELAY.

O DAYS and years,
So full of fears,
Who, who shall greet
Your sullen feet ?

Wakes the green earth,
Wake the blue skies,
A sunbright birth
To opening eyes ;

But Sorrow soon,
At height of noon,
In the heart's hall
Keeps festival ;

And cloudy cold
The wefts of grey
Falling enfold
The dying day.

O haste ! O shine !
Maiden divine,
Aurora bright
With quickening light

For hours unborn,
With laughing lips
For men forlorn
In night's eclipse.

LOVE IN THE MARKET-PLACE.

EVEN as the sun draws up the dewy cloud
From ocean depths and veils therewith his face,
Himself the weaver of his pallid shroud,
Himself the spoiler of his own fair grace ;

So thou, O Love, with shame thyself dost veil,
Shame born of fear, that bitter troubled deep ;
Oh, who shall know thee, poor and mute and
pale ?

Men pass thee by, all vainly dost thou weep.

Thou sittest in the crowded street, alone ;
And all the people chaffer for their wares,
Rare gem or fragrant spice ; of all, not one
To speak to thee or hear or see thee cares ;

Not one thy tender beauty can discern,
Much less the fire with life's own fuel fed,
That in thy heart eternally doth burn ;
They see but folded hands and sunken head ;

Wert thou to rise unveiled, how would their strife
In silence fall ! how trembling would they view
Thy face, the unshadowed joy and light of life !
But now they deem a beggar's dole thy due.

Yet sometime shall the sun his bondage burst,
And with a thousandfold more glory glow
On scattered clouds that held him prisoner erst ;
And thou, O Love, be not ashamed, but know,
That which in secret silence now is nursed
Some day through earth and skies shall over-
flow.

HOPE IN PENITENCE.

HAVE patience, O my soul, nor seek to know
Whether the work thou workest shall abide.

All mortal things must first with fire be tried ;
And some must fail, and some have bitter woe.
Dismiss vain longings, steel thyself to bear,
And having purposed strongly, strongly dare.

‘ Ah, surely,’ say’st thou, ‘ though my work decay,
Yet shall the height of my intent be known
And honoured among men when I am gone !’
How many nobler spirits day by day
Forgotten fade from earth, and leave no sign
Of pains and struggles far exceeding thine !

Or say’st thou haply, ‘ There is laid in heaven,
For those who toil and suffer, great reward ;’
Think not of that ; whatever there is stored
Is not as wage at stated season given,
But by His word who from the central deep
Assigns just lot to all, to smile or weep.

When thou art wafted through death's gloomy
 strait

Unto the land of righteous doom or praise,
There shalt thou find thy friends of other days;
But shall they stand with thee in equal fate?
Or how if they with lustrous deeds shall glow,
While thou, abashed, hast nought of worth to
 show?

'Ah, pure immortal spirits,' thou wilt say,
 'I am not worthy ye to me should speak;
 Yet look upon me, tempest-tost and weak';
And they in love will look on thee that day,
But not for long, for they have works to do
In mightier regions far beyond thy view:

Faint not that hour, but cleave unto the root
 That nurtures all eternally; from thence
Strong life shall come and flow through nerve
 and sense;

It may be thou wilt yet bear worthy fruit;
And then those others shall with thee rejoice,
And thou wilt hear the music of their voice.

THE FRAGMENT OF AN IDYLL.

ISABEL.

WHAT ails my dearest Emmeline
That she should lie upon the grass,
And count the clouds that idly pass
Across the azure deep serene,
Or melt in ether quite away—
She who is aye our merry queen
In pastime or in holiday?

EMMELINE.

O Isabel ! the lark is soaring,
And all his soul in song outpouring ;
I love to hear him as he sings ;
He tells me of a thousand things
Which he beholds the wide world over ;
Of many a happy maid and lover,

Who wander by the crystal rills
Rippling between the folded hills ;
Then of his cloudy chambers, bright
With golden or with pearly light ;
Of all in earth and sky and sea,
One thing alone he hides from me.

ISABEL.

And what is that ?

EMMELINE.

Oh, ask me not !

ISABEL.

I call to mind what I forgot.
For when the gale of yesterday
Smote with its thunder sea and land,
Drenching our cliffs with ocean-spray,
Upon their brink I saw you stand ;
Your hands were clasped as if in prayer ;
Full surely you were moved with care
For sailors whom the tempest's breath
Was hurrying to the gulfs of death.

EMMELINE.

Full surely, yes.

ISABEL.

How deep a sigh !

EMMELINE.

I knew it not.

ISABEL.

Alas ! but why ?

EMMELINE.

O Isabel, my heartstrings bleed !

ISABEL.

Tell me, oh tell, the truth indeed.

EMMELINE.

One left our harbour yestermorn,
A sailor-boy (ah, think no scorn !)
Who loved me ; words can ne'er express
His fire and force and gentleness.

He would have won (oh, may it be!)
High fortune ; but the hungry sea
Swallowed his ship in that fierce gale
Which turned my cheek with terror pale.

ISABEL.

He is not lost !

EMMELINE.

The fatal word
Remains unspoken yet. I heard
A boat was saved, and bore away
For refuge to some sheltering bay.

ISABEL.

How shall we learn ? Poor dove, your wings
Have felt the tempest's buffetings !

EMMELINE.

They told me, tidings might be won
About the westering of the sun ;
Till then, I hide away for fear
The inner weakness should appear,
The secret of my grief be seen.

ISABEL.

How long, my darling, has it been ?

EMMELINE.

My dearest, trusted Isabel,
To you alone I dare to tell
How it began. A six years' child
Was I, and rambled free and wild
Beneath our cliffs one summer's day ;
Along their front a broken way
Lured me to climb ; and up I went,
O'er crack and ledge and battlement.
At last I stayed, and looked around,
And saw that I was prison-bound ;
Before, behind, the way was barred ;
For where ascending had been hard,
Descending proved impossible ;
And sheer the rock below me fell.
My brain grew dizzy, and I cried,
' Help me ! ' a voice below replied,
' Stay, I am coming ! ' and my fears
Were stilled ; and up he clomb to me,
A boy my elder by three years,
And helped me down right tenderly.

And after that he oft would bring,
Whene'er we met, some curious thing,
Fossil, or sea-anemone,
And told of perils on the sea.
But then we left our house and bay
Seven years, and sojourned far away.
Again I saw him, when he drew
From stormy death a hopeless crew :
I stood, surf-beaten by the sea ;
What clapping hands, what hearts that burned,
As back he came ! and then I learned
His heart and mine ; he looked at me.
'Tis ten days since. . . .

. . . How long have I
Been lying here ? Adown the sky
The sun has dipped ; and I must throw
Blindly the lot, for life or death.
A thousand terrors overflow
My heart, and choke the failing breath.
Come, I am ready.

ISABEL.

Let us go.

A DUET OF EMIGRANTS ON THE OCEAN.

(He Sings.)

MAIDEN, mistress of the lyre,
Ere appear the starry choir
In the darkling sky,
While the daylight on the trembling ocean wave
Lingers, lingers, lingers still,
Strike a chord of courage high,
Fit for spirits true and brave,
Quelling fears of ill.

(She Answers.)

Oh, soft are the breezes, and clear is the heaven,
But far is the land of the west !
To ventures of peril our hearts we have given,
And sail on a measureless quest.

The brood of the sea in the billows are playing,
They leap with a glittering foam ;
And look where behind us a seagull is straying,
But soon is he weary for home.

Farewell to our home ! ye remembrances tender,
Ye dear ones of childhood, farewell !
To the flame on the verge, to the beaoning
splendour,
Bear onward, great deep, with thy swell.

O land of the sunset ! O great riven mountains,
Whose crown is of snow and of fire !
Ye forests untrodden, ye floods, and far foun-
tains,
Oh, fill us with noble desire !

Shall ours be the courage your strength to inherit,
And win you to lovelier life ?
Alas ! but we tremble, for frail is our spirit,
And stern is the toil and the strife ;

Earth, mother of marvel, thy vesture enweaving
With living mysterious thread,
Thou callest, we hear thee, and joyous or grieving
Our feet ever onward are sped ;

As a child, gone astray in the green forest mazes,
Will weep for a moment in fear,
Till lifting his head in new wonder he gazes,
Lo ! nigh him the wide-antlered deer ;

A whirring of wings from the brake is ascending,
A foxglove inclines to his hand,
And afar through the pines with the azure is
blending
A verdurous limitless land :

By rapture of daring his spirit is holden,
He strains to the heather-crowned height ;
For him and for us be the hours bright and
golden,
And hope be for ever our light !

(He Sings Again.)

The glory of the opening skies
Streams on thy heavenward-gazing eyes ;
The murmurs of the mighty sea
Give melody for melody ;

While in thy hand the living lyre
Scatters her notes, as sparks of fire
From steel and hammer's ringing strife
Rush forth to brief and burning life.

The arrows of thy quiver start
As buds of fragrance in the heart ;
The wound they make they heal again ;
They fall as soft as April rain.

And lo, and lo ! the king of day
Has caught the echo of thy lay ;
From rents of gloom he bears him forth,
And flashes far to east and north :

Oh, see how stream his locks of gold
Through crimson clouds in tumult rolled !
But face and form are lost to sight
In that abyss of dazzling light ;

And if he be, as poets tell,
Lord of the music-breathing shell,
Has he not surely come to ask,
‘ Who is it steals my wonted task ?’

Then onward to his western hall
In state he glides majestic.
Now, lady, o’er the heaving deep
Utter the spell that lures to sleep.

(She Answers Again.)

Haste, O Night !
Land and sea
Thirst for thee ;
Haste, O Night !

Dark-robed arise,
And with the wave
Of Lethe lave
Our burdened eyes ;

With soft hand press,
Until the brain
Forget her pain
And weariness :

Take, take away
The stir, the glare,
The busy care
Of restless day !

Haste, O Night !
Land and sea
Thirst for thee !
Haste, O Night !

A DIALOGUE.

THE IDEALIST.

THE hurricane's onset
Is curbed and is still.
How fair is the sunset
O'er ocean and hill !
But fairer the vision
The spirit can see
Of happy fruition
For men that shall be.

THE WORKER.

Yes, fair is the even ;
But all the wild day
The fast flashing levin
Has dazzled our way.

We toiled and we panted
Through hail and through wind ;
Rain-soaken, undaunted,
Our mules we unbind.

THE IDEALIST.

Ah, fiercer than lightning,
The flaming of strife,
When freedom, far brightening,
Calls nations to life ;
O'er chains cleft asunder,
O'er sceptre and throne,
The world's living thunder
For ever rolls on.

THE WORKER.

Is war's mighty madness
Thy watchword and star,
Thou prophet of gladness
To nations afar ?

Will cannon and sabre
Bring freedom at last ?
In patience I labour
Till strife be o'erpast.

THE IDEALIST.

Our fathers have told us
The thing that has been ;
And who shall enfold us
In safety serene ?
Yet when we have ended
The battle so sore,
May life then be blended
With peace evermore !

THE WORKER.

Though clouds swiftly rolling
Shall darken again,
Our passion controlling
We bend to the strain.

Then sweetly hereafter,
 When suffering is crowned,
Shall time flow with laughter
 And song breathe around.

BOTH.

All day from sky fountains
 The rain-flood has poured ;
All day on the mountains
 The torrents have roared.
Now scattered and riven
 The clouds flee away ;
Fair shine on us heaven
 At breaking of day !

WHERE RIVER MEETS THE SEA.

NAIAD with tresses
 Flowing and free,
Dewing caresses
 Over the lea ;

Nereid listening
 (Fair ocean maid)
Deep in the glistening
 Emerald glade ;

Grant us your guerdon,
 Children of life !
Loosen our burden,
 Sorrow and strife !

So may we measure
 Sweetly the hour
Here where ye treasure
 Shell and sea-flower,

Or in the verdurous
Mosses reclined
Sport with the amorous
Wandering wind.

Ah, through the blossoms,
Sisters, ye smile,
Blithely our bosoms
Quicken the while ;

Lo ! to the glancing
Ripples of song
Follow we dancing
Lightly along !

GOOD AND EVIL.

WHATE'ER thou deem'st on earth
Most evil, scan it well,
A buried seed of worth
Doth surely in it dwell ;

Though every voice combined
In honour of thy ways,
A something wilt thou find
To mend in after days.

DOUBT.

THE soul's deep visions touch with joy or pain ;
But whether this or that, one scarce can know
In doubtfulness of hope ; if hope be vain,
The flattering vision may be direst woe.

TRUTHFULNESS.

THOUGH many cry,
What sin it is to lie,
Yet they who bear
Truth's travail-pang, how rare !
Twofold the pain
Of him who would attain
The land of light ;
To clear the clouded sight,
And fashion struggling speech in words that aim
aright.

If thou through tears
And toil and trembling fears
Hast found the clue
That severs false and true,

Yet, yet beware !
For through the teeming air
 (Out of the deep
 Wherein thy passions sleep)
Storm-clouds may rise and break, and spoil what
 thou would'st reap ;

And wilt thou, then,
When all is known to men,
 Blameless appear,
In every part sincere ?
 Scarce will it be,
If snares have compassed thee.
 Strive only this,
To atone where thou didst miss,
And trust that dark shall yield to light, and
 sorrow's touch to bliss.

PATIENCE.

'Tis harder, when the dreams of youth
 Await in hope the seal of truth,
 To watch them dwindle day by day
 In dubious, lingering, slow decay,
 Than when Fate's sword, descending sheer,
 Smites off their blossoms clean and clear.

Yet thou, whose trembling thoughts aspire
 To some fair image of desire,
 Be not, howe'er thou pine forlorn,
 O'er quick to cast away in scorn
 Visions, that under cloudy skies
 Have shone to thee like Paradise.

For if thou hold thee patient still,
 Sincere in love and strong in will,
 The day shall come that parts indeed
 Mirage from truth, and flower from weed ;
 Whose issues, whatsoe'er they be,
 With light and peace shall comfort thee.

HAPPINESS.

O EARTH and sky and ocean,
Like Paradise
Ye greet our eyes
With never-ending motion.

O hour of hours the rarest,
What treasure bright
With sunny light
For memory thou preparest !

Winging thy downward pinion,
O swift and free,
Hast thou the key
Of heaven's high dominion ?

So sweet the smile thou wearest,
Thy sister hours
With wreathed flowers
Shall crown thee queen and fairest.

LAMENT OF A MAIDEN,
WHO BELIEVES HER LOVER TO HAVE
STRANGELY PERISHED.

OH, wherefore on the hills
Linger my feet beneath the summer skies,
When he, whose image fills
My lonely heart, is lost to these sad eyes ?

Dear hills, I must depart
From you for aye ; and that I must, is well ;
More sacred in my heart,
Entwined with him, so shall you ever dwell ;

With him, who in this glade
Pledged me sweet faith in the hour of love's bright
morn ;

With him, who now is laid
In sad strange tomb, in caves of night forlorn.

O stream ! if ever he,
In that immortal vesture clad, should seek
Thy banks for love of me,
And thou to his fine sense attuned canst speak,

Tell him of these hot tears
Wept in thy wave, the sighs I sigh to-day ;
Tell him, through lifelong years
I seek him ; tell him, I am his alway.

Seaward my tears descend,
Where lies their kindred flood ; but heavenly fire
Is of my course the end ;
There shall I mingle with my heart's desire.

Dear ancient friends, I go ;
Ye smile on me, soothing my lonely pain.
O my lost love ! I know,
Thee yet once more with these I shall regain.

NATURE AND SPIRIT.

How oft, in decay of some dearest affection,
When far from the crowd the lone spirit has fled,
O Nature, thy balm o'er each sad recollection
And desolate fancy has gently been shed ;
How oft were we soothed by the clear running
river ;

The hills in their glory, how raised they our soul !
Life breathed in the glade where the forest leaves
quiver,
And power in the ocean's long thundering roll.

Ah, can it e'er be, thou wilt change to our feeling ?
Shall all thy bright scenes but remind us of
pain ?

Shall mortal embitter thy fountain of healing,
And peace on thy breast shall we look for in
vain ?

What shadows are these with the woodland that
mingle ?

Our loved ones of old, whom we cherish no
more !

And the sunlight is chilled over torrent and dingle,
And our eyes fill with tears by the surf-beaten
shore.

Oh, heart that of man and of Nature art weary !

Why linger, when all thy frail courses are run ?
Since here is no love and no beauty to cheer thee,
Confess thee deluded, despairing, undone.

Nay rather, O dawn of the world's renovation,
Rekindle our torches that flicker and die,

And flush with the freshness of primal creation

The eye and the ear and the earth and the sky !

ON NEW YEAR'S EVE, 1887.

INTO night's bosom, dusk but clear,

Wakeful I stand and gaze ;

Lo ! where the starry Charioteer

And great Orion blaze !

What secret life, what pulse of fire

Thrills in your orbs, immortal choir ?

When man shall burst the bars of Fate,

And ope Time's mystic scroll,

And read his high exalted state

Amid the wondrous whole,

Your genuine essence he shall know,

And greet you with a kindred glow.

But Earth with tender jealous care

Enwraps her children still,

Lest aught in that sublimer air

Should nurture subtle ill ;

For pride may grow, and love depart,

'Mid tumult of the swelling heart.

So now I draw the curtain o'er
The star-bespangled skies,
Nor labour longer to explore
The world's wide mysteries ;
While thoughts of friends, in pleasant train,
Shed healing influence on the brain.

Kind eyes look on me through the dark,
Kind deeds are done again ;
I hear the silent voice, and mark
The long-forgotten strain ;
Quaint sayings uttered long ago,
Sweet offices that solaced woe.

Though parted far by land or wave,
Each several guest is here ;
Time hinders not, nor yet the grave ;
Full is the living sphere.
Then by their guardian presence blest
My senses sink in slumber's rest.

A SONNET.

WHAT gentle glow of converse deep or gay
 Shone round them in the years that are no
 more,
 My father's sisters ; whether by the shore
 Of meadowy Trent, or city's peopled way ;
 Three now are gone, one here abides to-day.
 Dear sole survivor of the happy four,
 On you the rest conjoin their lights, and pour
 Upon your eighty years their mellow ray ;
 While for the younger race there open lies
 Your common hearth, affection's welcome true ;
 And all our childish olden memories
 Can find their visible centre still in you ;
 As some tall hill, that meets the azure skies,
 Gives tone and point to all the lower view.

BONAMY PRICE :

BORN MAY 22, 1807 ; DIED JANUARY 8, 1888.

Who that beheld and knew thee, but would fain
Preserve thy image for the coming race ?
The prompt, quick mien ; the vivid mobile face ;
Broad brow, firm lip ; the invigorating strain
Of converse ; argument that ne'er would gain
A point unfairly ; tales that ran apace,
Not scant nor overfull ; the softer grace
And tenderer manner, growing with life's wane.
Children would fly yet seek thee, half dismayed,
But wholly mirthful ; every living thing
Felt thy electric presence, and was stirred.
Now all thy cares, thy thoughts, with God are
laid
In silent peace, till thy eternal spring
Blossoms at bidding of our Father's word.

AN ELEGY.

SWEET mistress of the ivory keys,
That ope the gates where Music dwells,
What sighs, what tears are these,
Wrung from the heart's torn cells
Of those who round thee wait
All desolate ?

How oft thy hands awoke with power
Each master from his mighty rest !
Alas, in this sad hour
The blossom lies unpressed
Which thy pale fingers hold
Senseless and cold.

How oft erewhile, thy spirit meeting,
Beethoven swept in flight of fire
Downward ; or Handel beating
Time for the angels' choir
Grafted his strong and free
Utterance in thee ;

Or Schubert breathed on thee his spell,
And taught thee so the luring lay,
It seemed our footsteps fell
On an enchanted way,
And very Paradise
Before our eyes

Trembled, as thou didst softly close ;
And heaven and earth together blent
In one divine repose,
Which now is rudely rent,
And our glad vision flown,
Since thou art gone.

Ah yet, ev'n yet, 'tis not in vain,
Dear only sister, what we heard
In that prophetic strain ;
The deeps unknown were stirred
When thou wert ta'en away
From mortal clay ;

And for more comfort in our care
Death struck thee with swift flying dart
As thou wert risen from prayer
What time thy constant heart
With glow of things eterne
Did inly burn ;

That so thy passage might not be
To something alien, but the spark
Which here was fed in thee
Might kindle all thy dark
With sudden overflow
Quelling thy woe ;

And that each tangling veil of earth
Might fall away and leave thee clear,
'Mid throbbings of new birth,
Within that blessed sphere,
The true and primal source
Of earthly force ;

Where happy spirits aye create
Order from chaos, life from death,
Fair love from fellest hate,
Waiting with duteous breath
His will, thro' whom their bliss
Perfected is.

Farewell, farewell, whate'er of thee
The kindly sacred soil may claim !
The hand, in giving free ;
And ah, thy tender frame ;
Pure lip, and patient brow,
Farewell—not thou ;

For where the holy fount is set,
That eye of flesh did never see,
From fears delivered, yet
May we rejoice with thee !
With pulses thrilling far
Past sun and star.

TO ALFRED MARSHALL.

FRIEND deeply skilled and ardent in the lore
 Of the world's wealth and weal, when yesterday
 I careless bade your faithful servant say
 Where you had gone, delaying at your door ;
 She told the place, nor let me go, before
 I wrote it down ; and then I found it lay
 In that fair vale of Tyrol, where with Cay
 I walked long since, when sunrise glimmered o'er
 Life's early skies ; and since you also knew
 (As well as I, though not so well as I)
 That passionate pure soul, methought 'twas due
 To send (while there you dwell and love is nigh)
 Some sign of things seen outwardly by you,
 By me thro' memory or in prophecy.

TO CHARLES HOPE CAY, WHO DIED
YOUNG.

(See the foregoing Sonnet.)

FROM Antelao's mighty slope

A spirit calls to me ;

On Civita's embattled cope

A comrade's shape I see ;

In Zoldo's glen each blood-red peak

That flames a sword on high

Like heavenly messenger doth speak

And tells me thou art nigh.

Friend hidden from these mortal eyes,

Remember'st thou to-day

The olden time, the earthly guise,

And all our wandering way ?

How oft at morn we scaled the steep,
At noon beheld below
A hundred valleys cradled deep
Under the crests of snow ;

How we descended gorge and glade
Thro' forests loved of yore
By Titian, when a boy he played
With boys in green Cadore ;

And how when skies were barred with gold
In deepening twilight clear,
We bathed in torrent icy-cold
Or mountain-shadowed mere.

The glory of the sunlit earth
Then drew us each to each,
Awaking into trustful birth
Sweet harmonies of speech ;

We spoke of men beloved and wise,
Of women kind and true,
Of life, and all the work that lies
For brain or hand to do.

But now I think a heart like thine
 Moves in the living light
Which through the world is poured divine
 In flashings infinite;

Thou of the chosen ones must be
 Who feel the fount of love
That streams with radiant energy
 Into the stars above;

Who vivify, exalt, inspire
 From thence our lowly clay;
Come, bring the spark of sacred fire;
 Come live with me to-day.

A TRIAD OF SONNETS.

I.

TO THE REV. T. E. BROWN.

(Written just before New Year's Day, 1897.)

DEAR poet of the isle so sharply set,
A single jewel, in the crystal deep
Encircled by four realms, whose people keep
Their Celtic fire and antique flavour yet ;
This verse of mine will tell I ne'er forget
Yourself and yours, and gladly by the steep
Of North Barrule, or where the waters leap
In Sulby's glen, would roam with you, and let
Your racy converse while away the hours ;
Still do I hope, although it tarries late,
To walk with you through Mona's springtime
flowers !
But now I waft the wish allowed by Fate ;
That this New Year, by Heaven's favouring powers,
Which finds you brave, will leave you fortunate.

II.

FROM THE REV. T. E. BROWN.

(In answer to preceding Sonnet.)

Speed on, great Sol, and bid the hours renew
The diamond-ypaven zodiac ;
Bid busy zephyrs clear away the rack
Of ruined months, let hyacinths be blue
Once more, nor any primroses eschew
The haunts of scented silence, where the black
Tempestuous North not enters, nor his pack
Accursed that yelps, but finds no passage through.
Come, Mozley, with the coming of the Spring,
And catch the breath that hints her presence
near.
Barrule is frowning, but the frown will pass ;
Sulby her sweetest song prepares to sing ;
And I have noted how the waking year
(For you, unquestioned) stirs in Ballaglass.

III.

Blindly, dear friend, I wafted wish to you,
The New Year trembling into birth, that Fate,
Before its close, would mark you fortunate.
Blindly I wrote, and yet the word was true ;
Only the meaning which the heathen knew,
Revealed by God in shadowy Time's far date,
How death alone brings happiest estate
Unto the faithful and the brave, whose due
Can ne'er be paid by man, this, this indeed
I had forgotten. Yes, I came in May ;
We walked and talked along the windy mead,
And through the yellow gorse above the bay ;
Such converse comes no more, but is the seed
Of unimagined fruit some future day.

[NOTE.—The Rev. T. E. Brown, to whom the above sonnet and that on page 94 are addressed, and who is the writer of the one on page 95, is widely known as the author of 'Fo'c'sle Yarns' and other striking poems, mainly, though not entirely, in the Manx dialect. His force of character, of intellect, and of feeling, made his loss deeply lamented by his friends. He died suddenly on October 29, 1897.]

PARKGATE ON DEE SANDS.

JUNE 21, 1893.

How have we marked thee every lengthening day
Of spring, fair sun, down hastening to thy goal,
Touching the western wave with kindling ray,
And nearing eve by eve the northern pole !

Would'st thou perchance unfreeze that icy shore,
And woo the dead white wastes to live and
smile ?

Ah, no ; to-day thy onward march is o'er ;
This eve thou dost descend on Hilbre's isle ;

And from that limit thou wilt backward go
With lessening light and narrowing span of
hours

Month after month, until December's snow
Covers the sere remains of shrivelled flowers ;

And then no longer on the sea's broad breast

But on the hills of Wales thou wilt decline,
Far to the South, past Moel Famma's crest,
In yonder gap that breaks the rugged line ;

Shorn of its beams, thy ruddy orb will then

Bid us through frosty air a dazed good-night.
But now thou reignest, and the hearts of men
Leap in the warmth and glory of thy might ;

Now the sea-sands are warm, and we may sit

And watch the inflowing tide, that foams and fills
The winding creeks, o'ertopping bit by bit
Dee's tawny couch between the ancient hills ;

Now with innumerable blossom in the lanes

The wild rose glistens ; now the cuckoo's call
Sounds from the copse, or wood-dove gently plains ;
Now boys come out with wicket, bat and ball ;

Hark to their ringing shout, as some keen stroke

Declares the victor in their mimic strife !
Who knows what emulous spirit then awoke
In aspiration toward the years of life ?

How in the future it should strive and strain
 With many labours over land and sea,
For future bliss despising present pain,
 And winning fame that shall eternal be ;

For man lies close unto the root of things,
 A sacred power is near his least endeavour,
And what is fed from those eternal springs
 Has surely praise for ever and for ever.

Sweet summer ! smiling earth and gracious sky !
 And ye, fair joys of youth ! what tender light
Gathers around you, as the swift years fly,
 Softening the pensive soul at fall of night ;

The summer night, in whose mid hour serene
 Twilight shall whisper dawn ; and even so
Doth mortal Memory fondly forward lean
 And catch from Hope's clear face the deathless
 glow.

A CHRISTMAS GREETING.

FROM THE GRIFFIN OF THE CAUCASUS TO THE
*GRIFFIN** OF PARKGATE.

START not ! O dear descendant mine ;
But view with chastened awe,
The very founder of thy line ;
And clasp a friendly claw !

Long ere thy valiant beaklet broke
The egg, or dared to drink
(While favouring heaven in thunder spoke)
Strange pap of printer's ink ;

I read thy fortunes, shining bright
In yonder starry fires ;
Fair Griffin-child, far be thy flight,
And worthy of thy sires !

* A school magazine, edited by my friend, Mr. A. G. Grenfell.

Noble the mind of Griffin-kind ;
 'Twas I whose mighty wing
(As in his verse sublime and terse
 Old Æschylus did sing)

Upbore the Ocean-god, when he
 Would counsel sage impart
To chained Prometheus, and set free
 That wrathful captive heart.

Beneath my very eyrie hung
 The Titan, sore oppressed ;
Above, Mount Elburz skyward flung
 His glacier-streaming crest.

Spake in that hour the wise immortals
 High in their bowers serene
That griffins aye should guard the portals
 Of treasures subterrene ;

We ope, we close, the golden lot,
 That men may win or fail ;
So thou hast read, I doubt it not,
 In many a fairy tale.

Now Griffin dear, I prithee hear ;
 Wield thou a puissant pen ;
But aye be keen thyself to screen
 From prying eyes of men ;

And if they ask with sceptic sneer
 Where thou may'st be to find,
What hill or valley, glen or mere
 Shelters our wondrous kind ;

If they should argue black and blue
 That ne'er a Griffin yet
Was ta'en and pastured at the Zoo
 Or on the road was met ;

If still more bold they should uphold
 That thou art but a flam,
Thy lion's paw not worth a straw,
 Thy eagle-beak a sham ;

Tell them a better man than they
 Has better seen and known,
And proved it all as clear as day,
 The Sage of Coniston.

In 'Modern Painters' plain it lies,
Both word and picture too ;
The Griffin false he doth despise,
But lauds the Griffin true.

True Griffins are we, thou and I ;
Let's to the hills and play ;
Come wheel about, and have a fly ;
For now 'tis holiday.

The mountains beckon us and call ;
Sparkles the sunlit sea ;
Great-grandchild, here's to Griffins all ;
Hurrah ! and three times three.

DONE AT THE PALACE,
MOUNT ELBURZ,
Christmas, 1893.

TO F. D. ON HER SIXTEENTH
BIRTHDAY.

SWEET sixteen is like the air
At seven o'clock in the morning
Freshly blown from the blossoms fair
Some garden-walk adorning ;

Ere noon' you may wander o'er vale and hill,
Or over the deep sublime,
But the blossoms' scent will be precious still
When you think of the early prime.

BY THE RAPIDS OF THE WYE, NEAR
BUILTH.

O TORRENT-RIVER ! bare and sheer
The crags thy flood confine ;
Yet soft the turf beneath us here,
And fragrant smells the pine.

Look downward, flowers are strown as stars,
And clear the glassy deep ;
But upward, see, through stony bars
What thronging eddies sweep,

What tossing thunders ! you would say
Yon crested billow seems
A wave of ocean gone astray
Among the woodland streams.

That were a talisman to stir
My raptured spirit free ;
Dear is that wave to the heart of her
Who is the soul of me.

RAPALLO.

MARY a warrior? Muse, in worthy verse,
I pray, the valour of thy sex rehearse.

'Twas by Rapallo. There's a rocky horn,
Which Italy the fair uplifts in scorn
Of south-west winds, that ply the peaceful wave
With scandalous advice to rage and rave,
As bearing some deep grudge, from ancient wrong,
Against the land of beauty, art, and song.
Here Porto Fino's little haven lies ;
And here the conflict gathered in such wise,
As, after reason's unavailing course,
Was ended by a woman's stroke of force.
We sat together looking o'er the bay,
Windswept and foaming, that beneath us lay ;
Earth, mighty mother, seemed all loveliness ;
A beauty's wiles what skill avails to guess ?

For she who 'gainst high Jove in times of old
Launched her Titanic brood of rebel mould,
Now 'gainst ourselves poured forth, I know not
whence,

A crowd of urchins, clamorous for pence ;
'Soldi !' they cried ; our best Italian we
Mustered, and chid their lawless energy.
But moral suasion fell on heedless ears ;
One ragamuffin, livelier than his peers,
And chief in stature, stepped in front of them,
Reached out to Mary, grasped her garment's
hem.

Like to the Roman in the forum seated,
(Doomed yet majestic, haughty though defeated),
Who thrilled with wrath, when curious overmuch
The victor Gaul profaned him with his touch ;
Raising his staff he smote the warrior down ;
So Mary, ruffled in her heart and gown,
Nor deigning longer such offence to brook,
Indignant, fired, her brave umbrella took,
Aimed at the caitiff an impetuous blow,
And routed with one single thrust the foe ;

More lucky than the Roman ! if dismay
At female prowess seized them, who shall say ?
Or haply native courtesy awoke ;
Or haply conscience in their spirits spoke ;
Or haply from the genuine sign of pain
New thoughts of prudence came across their brain.
The urchins vanished, as some Roderick Dhu
Had bid them sink within the earth anew.
Not faster pigeons from the cornfield fly,
When once they see a crazy musket nigh ;
Not faster clouds, by clearing tempests driven,
Melt from the azure of the vault of heaven.

TO MY GODSON.

CHILD, whose pure angel doth in heaven behold
Our Father's face for ever, may'st thou still
Go safe thro' all infirmity and ill
Which none can 'scape enclasped in earthly mould ;
And chiefly precious 'mong thy treasures hold
The touch divine, which or sustains thy will
Or duly chastens ; so shalt thou fulfil
Each perfect end, and like a flower unfold
Thy tender petals of immortal hue.
Nor less look back upon that hour of might,
Which saw creation rise in strength anew
Cleansed at the root from ancient deadly blight ;
When Calvary's cross upon the mourning few
Cast thro' profoundest darkness seeds of light.

LETTER TO A FRIEND
WHO HAD TAKEN ORDERS IN THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

FRIEND, on whose head were laid the holy hands
That joined thee to that ancient reverend line
Charged with the duty of those dear commands
And sacred feasts, of Christ's great death the
 sign,
And greater life, which now he lives divine ;
Think not I hold my sympathies afar
If so it be the settled choice is thine
To preach the word beneath their seal, who are
The appointed lords of souls, to make their peace
 or mar :

Yet forasmuch as thou erewhile hast been
Touched with the teaching of these latter days,
Whose ardour gathers out of depths unseen,
Not by the stated rule of formal ways ;

Ne'er from the tablets of thy soul erase
Heaven's mightiest law, that power and love
 await
(Through all obliquities of earth's dark maze
And all traditions ministrant of hate)
The brave and loving soul, and crown him soon
 or late.

For ask and learn, since history's primal hour,
In whom did virtue's keenest essence dwell
And touch the nations with immortal power ;
First wilt thou find the saints of Israel ;
Yet, Greece and Italy, arise and tell
What sages in you lived, what heroes died ;
Never was miracle, that could excel
The saint's, the hero's heart ; the flowing tide
Of time rolls on, and still those glorious names
 abide ;

But one with deepest passion more than all
We cherish ; who explored our human state
And bade our life no longer lie in thrall
To chance or weak with buffetings of fate ;

Who with the Highest dwelt 'mid desolate
Wanderings and loving toils and pangs of
death,

From whence he scattered seed that should
create

Plants of eternity, to breathe the breath
Of heaven, their native soil—Jesus of Nazareth ;

Him wilt thou ne'er forget ; nor those who
stand

Twin pillars in the city of our God,
Rivals, not foes, alike in just command,
Martyrs whose gentle blood dyed earth's green
sod,

Cephas and Paul ; nor many a saint who trod
The path of suffering for another's sake,
And cheered Christ's fainting flock on some
drear road ;

These wilt thou honour, and from these wilt
take

Deep draughts of patient hope, as from some lucid
lake.

Turn yet once more. What presences are these
Whose eyes flash anger, and their lips are set,
As men who combat mightiest enemies ?
Sons of the light are they, although the sweat
Of battle, and the warrior's fever-fret
Roughen their aspect ; never shall decay
Dissolve their memory and our righteous debt ;
With powers of eld, usurping boundless sway,
They entered mortal fight, and rent the yoke away :

Luther the one, whose lightning clove the chain,
Whereby the tender pulse of piety
Mechanic grew and lost the living strain ;
But he, the other—scarce a saint is he ;
And yet he cared for men, and this should be
A saintly token ; swift was he to dare ;
Forceful not stainless, broad not deep, in free
Humour he moved, and filled the quivering air
With shafts of scorn and light ; how name we him ?
Voltaire.

A REPLY TO ONE WHO SAID THAT
SHE LIKED NOT THE LAST WORD OF
THE PRECEDING POEM.

DEAR lips, that gently chid me, when I set
Voltaire among the heroes ; not as yet,
My child, thou know'st the subtle interchange
Of good and ill in man, the mixture strange ;
If saints were always saintly, then 'twere base
To play the mocker ; but their words of grace
Flow from the mingled founts of heaven and earth
And in the mixture show the unequal birth ;
For blind adorers miss the nobler part,
And worship phrases with a senseless heart ;
Thus tyrannies are bred ; and myriad fears
Assail, perplex, dismay the saddened years.

Scan history's page ; the record there is plain,
How Christ's, our Master's, words were turned to
 bane,

'Tis good and just to praise that ancient time
Of Christian faith the tender-budding prime,

When young and aged, men and women, vied
In holy conflict 'gainst the embattled pride
Of the world's empire ; who by dying o'ercame
Their slayers ; who endured the rack, the flame ;
Who never dealt a wound but with the spear
Of the invisible spirit, opening clear
The heart's sealed ways, and guiding to the light
Of stainless heaven and glories infinite.

But canst thou date the hour that darkened first
With fatal change, when men thro' fear reversed
Faith's true intent, and deemed that God would
send

Stern punishment and sorrows without end
On whoso dared to bend his feet astray
One tittle from a creed's hard-beaten way ?
Ah, then the formal word was throned above
The vital warmth of all-creating love ;
These two, allied in days of humbler power,
Were drawn apart by victory's testing hour ;
For while the true queen served (as ever still
She serves, for succour and redress of ill),

The handmaid stretched her sceptre of command
With haughty mien o'er many a trembling land,
And gathered to herself shield, sword, and spear,
And forced submission by a potent fear,
Narrowing her mercies as the years rolled on,
Till pagan cruelty grew pale, outdone
By Christian priest and king ; and though forgot
Was never quite the blessed priestly lot
Of helping helpless men, a shadow hung
O'er every thought, and curbed was every tongue.

Ye souls, who thirst for righteousness, whose eyes
Look for a nobler earth, diviner skies !
Pilgrims who seek eternity's fair field,
Where God and Christ and all the just revealed
Shall glorious greet each entering guest, and
pour
Their strength and love around him evermore !
Cease not your holy search ; but while ye burn,
Seek also this, and resolutely learn,
Whence came, how grew among you, that sad root
Which fed with treacherous sap such bitter fruit.

Voltaire, O Christian souls ! for this was sent,
To break the slumber of our vain content.
Whate'er his faults in conduct or in creed,
He taught a truth whereof the world had need ;
That cruelty, howe'er begirt with awe
By conqueror's pride or customary law,
Or by religion's sacred seeming name,
Affixes on its doer guilt and shame ;
And that howe'er the crown of endless life
Excels the baubles of our earthly strife,
Yet plain and visible experience still
Must be to us the test of good or ill ;
We may be doubtful of the seed when sown ;
The fruit's true flavour surely shall be known.
He erred, opposing error ; deep disguise
Had veiled the truth from truth-pursuing eyes.
He erred against the strong ; the weak oppressed
Found him a helper, and their wrongs redressed.

THE EVE OF NASEBY.

NIGH to Northampton lay encamped the power
 Which fought for Parliament against the King.
 Fairfax the chief; but Cromwell o'er the will
 And conscience of that iron soldiery
 Held a magnetic force beyond compare.
 Who from the levels of the east had spurred
 With twice three hundred horsemen, all athirst
 To mingle in the battle that drew near.
 Bareheaded now he sat, his helmet doffed,
 Beneath the windy heaven of middle June,
 And conned a map; then lifting eagle eyes
 Caught sight, through all the arming throng, of
 one
 Standing afar; but spoke to one close by;
 'Fetch Roger Cranston hither.' He obeyed.
 Then Cromwell thus to Roger: 'We have come

Well timed, thou seest, and God hath prospered
us.

No man fell out or lagged in all our ride.

Now, Roger, is there work for thee to-day.

Thou art of Banbury ; thou know'st the hills,

And scattered hamlets, and the miry lanes,

'Twixt that and Daventry ; ride and bring us
news

If any hitherward from south or west

Approach to help the King. Use wary eyes ;

Capture, and be not captured ; if thou seest

A single trooper, scout, or messenger,

Who serves the foe, compel his hand or mouth

To yield its secret ; combat not with two,

Save at advantage ; question straitly all

Who seem as travelled men, or cognisant

Of what is passing in the region round.

To-night our camp is pitched at Guilsborough ;

Be not belated past the midnight hour.'

'Ay, sir, I loiter not,' the youth replied ;

'Is there aught further you would charge me
with ?'

Then Cromwell: 'I would ask but this of thee.
Is it then so, that none of all thy kin,
Saving thyself, hath seen in passing glimpse
God's presence, and the lightnings of his power?
How he matures the seed of men to-day,
And brings to birth a generation filled
With breathings of his Spirit? I would fain,
For love of thee, that others of thy stock
Foreknew the judgments which o'erhang the
earth,
The workings of the Highest.'

'All of mine,'

Roger replied, 'are ranked beside the King.
My father sits among the councillors
At Oxford; there my mother weeps for me;
The news of which, I do confess, although
My will stands firm, yet made me sad all day;
My brothers are with Goring in the west;
They would deride me, should I seek to turn
Their purpose in the way that mine is set.'

'Natheless,' said Cromwell, 'if occasion comes,
Speak thou conviction from thy heart of hearts,

And fear not. Hast thou learnt the pass to-day ?'
'Ay, sir; a two-edged sword.' ' 'Tis so; the word
Hath meaning. Twofold is the stroke of God;
He pierces first the spirit; then o'ercomes
With edge of steel the throne of tyranny,
And hews it into faggots for the fire;
Whose burning as a beacon shall o'erblaze
The heavens, and light the earth, and teach the
 hearts

Of many men, and raise the honest poor
Out of their trampled state, until their eyes
Are purged to look on things divine. But thou
Be strong in soul and body; time is brief;
Hasten; to-morrow must we match the foe.'
And Roger Cranston with uplifted heart
Listened, as one on whom the heavens had shone
With clearest message; he saluted then
And answered, 'Sir, your words remain with me,
And shall have fruit.' A gallant youth he seemed;
Alert and strongly knit; not overtaill;
Fair-haired, and fair of hue; of cheerful eye;
Refinement in his lip betokened one

Sprung of a knightly breed ; and in his mien
A something wilful mingled, as of years
That had not felt Time's yoke ; yet not inapt
Was he to yield to reasoned discipline ;
And all within him was exalted now
By passion beating toward the infinite
Of Justice in the stainless airs of heaven.
Hastening he loosened from the stall his steed
Which there had stood three hours, and saddling
him,
Patted his neck and spoke a cheery word ;
Then sword at side and pistol in his belt
Mounted and shook the reins and up the slope
Southwestward rode. And thus he thought: 'Tis
well
That I should have a birthday gift to-day ;
And there's no gift like trust, by him conferred
Whom men most honour. Three and twenty
years
Have been accomplished in my life to-day ;
I ride unharmed, and taste the good of life ;
Yet is the circuit of our days on earth,

Be it or short or long, a little thing,
Compared to that invisible, wherein
We secretly are swathed. That still abides
In me, and still is mine, although I die.
But stay, enough ! of thinking there's no end ;
And here's the hilltop ; let me glance around.'
So was it as he said. The crowning ridge
Gave distant prospect ; far to north a mound
Scarred with a recent burning rose distinct
In every fold and curve beneath the rays
Of mellow afternoon ; and Roger knew
The trace of blackened huts where yesterday
The royal army in their fitful course
Advancing halted, whence they drew again
Northward, uncertain whom to fight, whom shun.
By Lichboro' then he rode, and where the spire
Of Preston Capes o'erlooked the green expanse
Of undulating woods ; and whensoever
He passed by any wayfarer, who seemed
To be a traveller from afar, he asked
What things were happening in the west and
south ;

Whether with hurried march and energy
Proportioned to the greatness of their hope
Goring or Berkeley pressed with new-found troops
To aid King Charles ; but none could answer
him ;

Rumour was rife, but knowledge scant ; howbeit
Of Leicester captured all had heard, and drew
Augury thence of victory for the King.

And Roger felt but spoke not his disdain.

Now when he came to Charwelton (where springs
The lucid river which by Oxford towers

Is mingled with fair Isis) he espied,

Just off the road, a rustic hostelry

With country bumpkins sitting on a bench

Quaffing their ale in front ; so up to these

He gently walked his horse and questioned them

Even as the rest ; and one of them replied :

‘ Sir, we have heard of nothing, and we wish

To hear of nothing. Saving your respect,

We had as lief be out of sight of swords.’

‘ The sword shall free you from the sword, my
friend,’

Said Roger ; ‘ this is needful ; I myself
Yield not to any man in love of peace ;
But peace, without the fruits of peace, is nought ;
Tyranny robs the land, and must be stayed,
Though for a while men suffer.’ ‘ Ay, I see,’
The peasant answered circumspectly slow ;
‘ You do us good against our proper will ;
You give us medicine, though we like it not ;
Well, God be with you.’ Roger at the word
Turned to depart ; but now a harsher voice
Broke from the side and checked his ready spur :
‘ Is this a Cranston speaks of tyranny,
Meaning the king ?’ A man of soldier mien
And fiery eye, but lacking the right arm,
Stood there ; and quietly the youth replied :
‘ Yes, Roger Cranston ; but I know thee not.’
‘ Nor know I thee, for thou appear’st a rebel ;
Which never yet a Cranston was, God knows.’
And saying this, composedly he sat.
Then Roger scanned him sharply, and replied :
‘ Fellow, thou dost presume on thy lost arm.’
‘ That arm was shorn away on Edgehill field,’

Returned the other, 'where thy father joined,
Although grey-haired, with more than youthful
fire ;

I saw him fight ; such vigour is imbreathed
Into the soul by nought but loyalty.'

'Therefore,' retorted Roger, 'shalt thou see
That I am loyal to the King of kings ;
Who also hath ordained his ministers,
Generals or captains, in this earth of ours,
To set the things aright which suffer wrong
Through lawless potentates.' Therewith he paced
His steed to where the westward road began ;
A mocking cry still pealing from behind :
'A callow youth thou art and ignorant ;
Go ; thou wilt find in fight thy match, and more.'
And looking o'er his shoulder, once again
Did Roger speak : 'That may be so or not ;
Your king shall find his match, which counts for
more.'

Now at the road's square turn a man went by,
In aspect weather-beaten, travel-worn,
But shrewd and keen ; a pack upon his back ;

To whom thus Roger: 'Whence and whither,
thou?'

'From Bromwicham to Buckingham I go;

What would you more?' 'Hast heard of troops
that haste

From Devonshire or Wales to help the King?'

'I heard of none; the land through which I came
Since yestermorn was full of gentle peace;

The ploughers ploughed, the mowers mowed, the
corn

Stood greenly up along the furrowed field;

On village greens the happy children played,

And wives sat knitting by the cottage door;

Birds sang and roses breathed, and sign of war

Was none. Yet stay! I do remember me,

At yonder village (Byfield is the name),

There rode a single horseman from the south

Up to the inn, and questioned there the folk,

Whether King Charles, as he had heard, was still

Encamped at Daventry; and they answered him,

The King, they knew, had northward drawn
again;

And then he bade them feed and rest awhile
His splashed and sweating horse;—but sir, me-
thinks,

You are for Parliament ?’ ‘ ’Tis so ; proceed.’
‘ He bore, I guess, a message for the King
By word or letter ; could you master him
(Armed was he, as yourself) ’tis like your doubt
Would be resolved, what help will reach the
King.’

Then Roger cried : ‘ How long since thou wast
there ?

Tell me a mark that I may know him by.’
‘ Dark grey the horse ; upon his helmet waved
An azure plume ; he would have left ere now ;
Or so I judge ; and yet, perchance, not long ;
Ride onward ; at the meeting of the roads
It may be, you will yet encounter him.’

Then Roger spoke no other word, but spurred
His horse to gallop ; presently he drew
Nigh to the meeting of the northward road—
Lo ! at a speed far swifter than his own
A horseman thundered past, his face and garb

Hidden behind a leafy hedge, but plain
The azure plume that floated high, and plain
His charger grey ; then Roger from his belt
Drew pistol, tightened rein, took aim, and fired.
Reared high the dark-grey charger, screamed, and
fell

With crash upon the road. With speed renewed
Pressed Roger ; round the angle curving then
Sent rapid glance and saw a horseman stand
Beside the fallen steed ; but ere he saw,
There came a something whizzing by, a graze,
A tingle on his cheek, and sense of blood ;
Yet thought he not thereon, but rode amain,
Till halting, with a sudden gasp he knew
His brother. ‘ Reginald ! ’ he cried ; ‘ ’tis thou ! ’
‘ Ay, Roger, it is I. ’ ‘ What dost thou here ? ’
‘ Nay, rather, what dost thou ? this is thy deed. ’
And Roger looked again, and knew the horse
So swift, that he himself in years gone by
Had named him Lightning, and the name had
stood ;

From his own horse he leaped, and fondled there

The fallen creature ; ‘ Lightning !’ he exclaimed,
‘ Alas that I have slain thee ! Reginald,
’Tis not ourselves who do the deeds we do ;
We are the instruments of powers that rule
Our spirits ; yet ’tis pity.’ ‘ Say’st thou so ?’
Returned the other ; ‘ ’tis a little thing
Which makes thy tears in this sad hour o’erflow.
This poor dumb creature, gallantest of steeds
That were or shall be in my father’s stalls,
No more his quivering eager flanks shall bear
My battle, nor his nostrils snort in ire
Against the rebel van ; thou slewest him,
And now dost grieve for him ; hast thou no tears
That thou thy country slay’st ?’ And Roger
looked

Intently at his brother, and replied :
‘ Brother, our chance is hard, that here to-day
We meet as foes : and if I slew thy horse,
Thou camest little short of slaying me ;
Was it within thy mind, I prithee tell,
When thou didst pull the trigger even now,
That I, thy brother Roger, was the mark ?’

‘Nay,’ Reginald replied, ‘I knew thee not.
My heart is not so hard. Yet hard it is
Against all solvents of its loyalty.
Accept just reckoning, Roger ; yield thy horse
In place of that which thou hast robbed me of.’
Thus while he spoke, with stately form erect,
His dark eyes flashed resolve inflexible
Beneath a tranquil and a lofty brow,
And rested full on Roger ; who in turn
Looked equal ardour back and answered him :
‘Thou know’st thou speakest idly, Reginald.
I, on my part, now bid thee yield to me
The message which thou bearest for the King.’
‘Thou breath’st defiance?’ Reginald cried out ;
‘Roger, if this be so, there is no help
But we must fight. Yet would I ask thee first ;
Regard and judge the cause which thou dost
spurn ;
What has the King done so injuriously
To thee or thine, that thou must join the crew
Of rebels?’ Quickly Roger then replied :
‘Is there no thought within thee, Reginald,

Of injuries whereby the common weal
May suffer deadly wrong, and I be bound,
Albeit unharmed, to aid the suffering part ?'
'Ay, but these wrongs,' said Reginald, 'are oft
The cravings of ambition, which rejects
Accustomed rule, that so itself may grow
In greatness through the trouble of the times.
Tell me what open or what secret wrong
The King has done, sufficient to absolve
His people from their bond of faithfulness ?'
Then Roger spoke : 'I wonder, Reginald,
That thou dost ask me. Know'st thou not how
long—
Eleven full years—he held this kingdom dumb ?
The world was all ablaze, and England lay
Inert, because she lacked a Parliament
To counsel for th' oppressed. But our good King
At home was active ; yet for lawless ends.'
Spake Reginald again : 'I wonder too
That thou recallest wrongs, if wrongs they were,
Righted so long ago. What end shall be
Of taking vengeance ? has not Strafford fallen ?

And with what pangs of heart our King allowed
His death, thou knowest. 'Tis so very long
Since Parliament was null or weak, my mind
Cannot recall the time. Laud too is slain.
What more doth Parliament require as pledge
Of their own licence for the years to come ?'
'Nay,' Roger answered, 'tell me what shall serve
As pledge from such a King, who ne'er has met
His people with an open willing heart,
Or granted aught without the mute resolve
Some day by violence to win it back.
Name, if thou canst, a pledge that he will ne'er
A second time, as once, with banded swords
Pounce down upon the chiefs of Parliament.'
Then Reginald: 'If thou wilt reckon up
All deeds that go beyond strict bounds of law
In such disordered time, thou must accuse
Thy boasted Parliament. What law allowed
Imprisonment of bishops, whose offence
Lay but in urging claims of ancient rights
Unquestioned till these days by any man ?
Shall liberty of speech belong to none

Except thy friends ? Such liberty is strange.'
'Thou swervest,' Roger answered, 'from the point
Wherein the cause is centred. It may be
That Parliament with some severity,
In breach of custom, used those reverend men ;
Yet in the main by sober law they framed
Sequence of action ; but the King esteemed
The law as nothing better than his slave,
Twisting and turning it as seemed him best
These many years ; or else in last resort
He did his will and bade the law go hang ;
The cases are not equal.'

Reginald

Looked at his brother, heaved deep breath, and
cried,

'Thou art resolved ? is this the end of words ?'
And laid his hand on hilt of sword. Then thrilled
Roger all over at such word and act ;
'Resolved ? ay, ay,' he answered, doing the like.
'Have guard !' cried Reginald. Out flashed their
swords ;
And for a minute's space you scarce could see

The blades, so fast the dazzle, as they glanced
This way and that ; then Reginald's keen thrust
Pierced Roger underneath the heart ; who fell ;
Yet even at the instant of his fall
His arm had swing, and with his sword he clove
Sinew and flesh of Reginald's right arm,
Whence spurted forth the blood ; but Roger's
wound,
The deadlier, gave no sign.

It chanced, hard by
There stood a cottage ; and the clamorous sound
Of pistol-shots, and voices afterward
In stern quick utterance, then the clash of swords,
Had brought the housewife to her garden-gate ;
Behind her stood a daughter of twelve years ;
These watched till Roger fell, and then they ran,
And raised his head, and placed it tenderly
Upon a little mound of grass that grew
Beneath the roadside hedge. But Reginald,
Spite of his wound, yet strove on Roger's steed
To mount, if so perchance he might fulfil
His mission to the King ; but loss of blood

Had weakened him, and also at his heart
A secret pang was clutching inwardly,
And once and yet again he called himself
Murderer and fratricide ; at last o'ercome
In body and in soul, fainting he fell.

Then Roger raised himself, and saw the blood
That still was welling from his brother's veins,
And called to those twain helpers : ' See to him !
For me, ye cannot help me.' With the word
Backward he fell again ; the good wife rose
And fetched her shears and cut the sleeve away
That clogged the wounded arm of Reginald,
And with tight bandage stanch'd the ruddy flow ;
The while her daughter with the cool clear wave
Fresh from the spring that bubbled up hard by
Sprinkled the brow of Roger and his lips,
Until, half-raised, and leaning on his arm,
He looked around. And Reginald by now
Had stood upon his feet ; across the road
He slowly came, and sat by Roger's side.
' O Roger, tell me, is thy wound to death ?'
' 'Tis so, I fear,' said Roger, and he laid

His hand upon his brother's ; who no more
Refrained his tears, and thus to speak began :
' O miserable time ! O Roger ! slain !
Yet wilt thou think me but a hypocrite,
That I lament and mourn what I have done—
Thou knowest well what thou hast said but now,
'Tis not ourselves who do the deeds we do.
We are commanded, and we do the deed
It tears our heart to look upon. O yet
That thou may'st live ! tell me, if aught there be
My hand can do for thy relief this hour,
To show I am thy brother !' Roger smiled
And whispered ' Water.' Then the little maid
Hastened and bore a cup and filled it full
Out of the sparkling spring, and Reginald
Took it and held it while his brother drank,
Until his parching throat grew fresh again ;
And then he spoke : ' Accuse not, Reginald,
Thyself in any way ; I wounded thee ;
I might have slain thee, as thou me hast slain.
I fear I shall not live. Perhaps 'tis well ;
It might have been, if I had lived, that hate

Had grown between us in these bitter days.
Nor thou, nor any that are dear to me,
Will hate me now. And if thou askest more
For comfort of thy heart, remember this,
Thou once didst save my life, that summer day,
When I was bathing in the treacherous sea,
Which drew me further and yet further still
Into the deep ; I could not win the land
By my own strength ; thirteen the years I had,
And thou hadst twenty ; thou didst plunge and
swim

Risking thyself. Moreover, Reginald,
Forgive, if I have spoilt the plot for thee.
Lo, here come they who will annul it quite.’
Ev’n as he spoke, three horsemen from the north,
Their chargers sweating and all flecked with foam,
Rode up, and Roundhead on each several face
Was written plainly. ‘Cranston!’ one exclaimed.
‘Ay, Cranston,’ Roger answered, ‘but no more,
Scoutmaster, like to be of use to you.
This is my brother ; use him well, I pray.’
Then spoke Scoutmaster Denzil : ‘We had heard,

A half-hour since, through Daventry as we passed,
Rumour of fighting on this side of us.

So have we hastened hither.' As he spoke,
Another trooper of the three descried
The gleam of hidden writing, where a stroke
Of Roger's sword had gashed the shoulderbelt
Of Reginald ; off from his horse he sprang,
And seized the wounded man (too weak to stay
Such forceful rush) and with his dagger's point
Widened the rent, and drew a packet out ;
Which to his chief he gave ; who opening read
What there was written, and then briefly spoke :
' This is from Goring ; he entreats the King
To hold back fourteen days, and he will press
In force to aid him. Cranston, you have won
For us these tidings, and the generals
Shall know it. We, be sure, will hold not back.'
Then upon Roger looked he narrowly,
And spoke again : ' Is this a fatal hurt ?'
' I fear 'tis so,' said Roger. Once again
Spoke the Scoutmaster : ' We will send all help
From Daventry.' Then to Reginald he turned :

‘ Sir, we must bear you with us, if your faith
Be not assured to us, that you will serve
No more in arms against our cause, so long
As Parliament and King in war contend.’

‘ I am your prisoner,’ Reginald replied ;
‘ And save by lawful interchange set free,
I give the promise you exact of me.’

‘ We may not tarry,’ Denzil spoke again ;
‘ Cranston, farewell.’ And stooping from his
horse

He grasped the hand and looked into the eyes
Of Roger. ‘ God be with you !’ he exclaimed.
‘ Amen !’ the other answered. Then the three
Set spurs and galloped off and vanished o’er
The hilltop ; and the brothers were alone.

That night did Roger Cranston’s spirit leave
Its mortal tenement, and Reginald,
Albeit in pain and fever of his wound,
Sat by his side until the end was come ;
Few words they spoke, and yet they spoke the
words

Which suited well the hour ; and Reginald,
When all was o'er, looked upward at the stars,
And thought of mysteries of earth and heaven,
Which were and are and shall be evermore.

TO THE AFRIDIS.

BRAVE foes ! our warriors, battling day and night
 Against you, with the ne'er-remitting strain
 Of sinew, nerve, keen eye and watchful brain,
 Through vast drear gorges, 'neath the soaring
 height
 That woos the stars, in splendour snowy-white—
 Yea, ev'n the spirits of our sacred slain,
 Whose death has cloven hearts with piercing
 pain,
 Will not forbid the wish, your stormy might
 One day may help us ! If your faith be named
 Fanatic, in fanatic faith there lies
 Some promise, or we needs must be ashamed
 Of our Crusaders. We with sorrowing eyes
 Should see, if they by force alone were tamed,
 Who by pure counsel might be rendered wise.



